



# News Release

## Arizona Department of Public Safety

2102 West Encanto Boulevard – Post Office Box 6638

Phoenix, Arizona 85005-6638

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Direct Inquiries to:

Harold A. Sanders

#### Contact Information:

“pio@azdps.gov”

### **IIMPACT Unit Detectives Conduct Investigation Uncover 42 Undocumented Aliens and Arrest 8 Suspects**

On Tuesday, May 13, 2008, Detectives from the Illegal Immigration Prevention & Apprehension CO-op Team (IIMPACT) conducted an investigation into a large number of people believed to be undocumented aliens being held against their will at a west side residence.

At approximately 11:30 AM today, Phoenix Police Department Officers were on patrol in the 6400 block of West Virginia when they noticed unusual activity at a residence located at 6420 West Virginia. They noticed several people quickly going in the residence in an unusual format and decided to conduct a welfare check at that residence. Two male subjects ran from the property as the Officers approached. The Officers uncovered that there were a total of 50 people found in the residence. All of the males were found stripped down to their underwear and held in fortified rooms to prevent their escape. The females were found in a separate fortified room.

Phoenix PD requested the assistance of the IIMPACT Unit to conduct an investigation. IIMPACT Unit Detectives arrived on scene and during their investigation they uncovered that 42 of the 50 people were being held against their will. Eight of the 50 were identified as the suspects who were controlling the others. Out of the 42 individuals being held, one individual had been physically assaulted by the suspects to the point that required transport to an area hospital. In addition, three were adult females and three juveniles. As listed earlier, the males were stripped down to their underwear, which is done regularly by the suspects to keep them from escaping. Also, the physical abuse and threats of violence are some of the forms of intimidation and control that are used by the “coyotes.”

Interviews with those being held revealed that most of them believed they had been in the house for at least two days or maybe a week. Many also stated they had not been fed in over a week. There was very little food found in the residence and definitely not an amount to feed over 40 people. It is believed that the individuals in this group were destined for Los Angeles, New York, North Carolina, Virginia and other areas in the U.S.

The suspects are currently being interviewed and once the interview process is completed and they are booked into the Fourth Avenue Jail, their names will be provided in a follow-up E-mail. The pending charges they will face will be; Extortion, Kidnapping, Human Smuggling and Aggravated Assault.

The 42 individuals believed to be undocumented aliens were turned over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel.

Note: Photos of the scene are also being provided.

*IIMPACT is composed of the Phoenix Police Department (PPD), U.S. Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Arizona Fraudulent Identification Task Force (AFIT) and the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS). IIMPACT was formed over a year ago and is a project managed by the Gang Immigration and Intelligence Team Enforcement Mission (GIITEM), a multi-agency task force administered by the Arizona Department of Public Safety. IIMPACT was designed to investigate crimes involving extreme violence; such as kidnap, rape, homicide, assault, extortion, home invasions, hi-jacking and the overall disregard for human life associated with the serious problems of human smuggling. The overall goal of IIMPACT is to make Arizona communities safer by deterring, disrupting and dismantling the criminal organizations operating through the apprehension and prosecution of those involved.*

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